

ALIGNER

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ABSTRACT

PURPOSE: To rapidly replace the air of a vessel of a lens system of an aligner with inert gas.
CONSTITUTION: A wafer 4 is irradiated with a laser light L(sub 1) emitted from a light source 1 via a light source lens system 2, a reticle 3 and a projection lens system 5. Lenses 2a-2c of the system 2 are contained in a vessel 2d. When the source 1 is started to be driven, first and second solenoid valves 8b, 8c of a nitrogen gas supply unit 8 are simultaneously opened, a large quantity of nitrogen gas is supplied to internal spaces 2f, 2g of the vessel 2d, and replaced with the air. After a predetermined time is elapsed, the valve 8c is closed by a program set to a controller 7. Thereafter, a small quantity of the nitrogen gas is supplied to the vessel 2d only via a bypass line 8d.